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Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 23/80)

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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

REFLECTIONS ON CAMP DAVID, IRAQI-IRANIAN RELATIONS

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 25 Apr 80 pp 14-16

[Article by Tariq 'Aziz: "In Order That the Cards Not Be Shuffled, the Trenches Not Encroach On Each Other, and the Plotting Not Continue"]

[Text] Ever since its rebirth in modern times, the Arab nation has faced many kinds of plots and challenges directed at its entity, cultural personality, and parts of its territory, as well as at its freedom, basic well-being, and legitimate aspirations for unity and rebirth.

For scores of years the Arab nation has experienced a state of still-unresolved acute tension and heated struggle in the depths of its very being, on the one hand, and between itself and external forces on the other hand.

During these long and difficult labor pains, the Arab nation and its revolutionary liberation movement has been able to achieve many victories, and has also suffered bitter setbacks and serious defeats.

There is much which can be said about the Arab nation's past and present situations, the reasons for its setbacks and victories, and the warnings and lessons which can be derived from this one or that.

But in this modest attempt I want to shed light on a specific aspect, which I believe is exceptionally significant with respect to the circumstances of the Arab nations, and which plays a basic role. either in the setbacks suffered by this nation or in the victories it has achieved.

This aspect is clarity and card-shuffling, and the present circumstances facing the Arab nation in relation to this aspect, especially pertaining to its relations with Iran.

In my estimation, an honest study of the course of the Arab struggle during scores of years of tension and struggle would indicate an important truth: that in the battles and challenges into which they have plunged, the Arab nation and its revolutionary liberation movement, even in cases of their relative material weakness, have been stronger and better when the conditions were clear and the battle trenches between them and the enemy were widely spaced, than when the cards were shuffled, the picture shaky,

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and the trenches between them and the enemy were enroaching on each other--even though, in the second case, they possessed better material forces.

It might be said that this fact is a general one, no more unique to the Arab nation and its revolutionary liberation movement than to anyone else. This is true, but the tragedy of the Arab nation is that many of its people and leaders are not as aware of this fact as they ought to be, at a time when the adversaries are concentrating intensely on it and are skillfully and maliciously exploiting it to the utmost. This phenomenon has been repeated time after time, as have the setbacks and losses which have surrounded the nation at those times when it appeared to be strong and capable of progress and rebirth.

For comparison, let us take some examples from this generation's modern history.

In the Forties, a greater part of the Arab world was under direct colonialist domination, and there were very few Arab countries which possessed independence as outlined in foreign treaties--not to mention the spreading colonialist influences in all areas of politics, economics, administration and culture. These Arab countries were poor, backward, and militarily weak, and their diplomatic and information agencies were extremely weak and backward.

At that time, the Zionist plan was carried out with the establishment of the Zionist state in Palestine. In spite of all the instances of weakness and backwardness which we have referred to, the Arab regimes were forced into resistance and combat. Zionism, backed by the entire colonialist world, with a bit of Soviet assistance as well, was able to appropriate only a limited portion of Palestine to establish its usurping entity, and that was answered by total rejection by the Arab world. The determination to reject the Zionist entity, and the hopes for regaining the usurped land, remained strong.

After more than 30 years of that history, all the Arab countries gained their independence, and acquired armies and information and diplomatic agencies much more advanced than those of the Forties. The budgets of a considerable number of Arab countries rose to the billions. But in the shadow of this relative strength in the Arab position, we find that many Arab circles accepted the Zionist usurpation of that portion occupied before 1967, and did not refrain from dealing, in one form or another, with the Zionist entity. In fact, the president of the greatest Arab state went so far as to recognize it and ally with it and imperialism against the Arab nation.

Naturally, there are many reasons for this notion--political, economic, cultural, local, Arab and international--and much could be said about them. But we must not forget that the one who did that, i.e., al-Sadat, was the person who broadcast the first statement of the 23 July 1952 revolution. He was the vice-president for the nationalist president 'Abd-al-Nasir until

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the latter's death. He was the one who led Egypt when it plunged into the October 1973 war. In the post-October war stage, there were only a very few Arab revolutionary nationalists who warned of al-Sadat's deviationist course, while the majority considered al-Sadat a national leader. Although this or that leader disagreed with him on details and tactics, many Arab political leaders remained his allies, up to the day before his inauspicious visit to Jerusalem.

How could al-Sadat switch from being the "national leader" and "Hero of the October war," as he was viewed even among circles not opposed to him, to recognizing the Zionist entity and betraying the Arab cause in this barefaced, shameless manner, while the political leaders of the Forties and Fifties, with all their well-known reactionary traits and foreign connections, could not do even a fraction of what al-Sadat did?

In my belief, the basic "secret" of that is that during the Forties and Fifties, the struggle between the Arabs and the Zionist entity was plain, and the trenches of the two sides were widely separated. Therefore, even the rulers obviously connected with western colonialism did not dare to do what al-Sadat did after them in many agreements.

We will not be skirting the truth by saying that if al-Sadat had announced his determination to go to Jerusalem and cooperate directly with the Zionist enemy a year after he took over the presidency, the masses would have executed or murdered him in a mass uprising. If he had made that announcement right after the October war, he would have faced extreme opposition. But he was able to do all of that in 1977, and to continue his conspiratorial plots.

Al-Sadat organized a cunning, malicious, gradual card-shuffling operation. He mixed up military work, which appeared similar to a liberation war, with political flexibility, which gradually forsook causes and interests. Prior to that, al-Sadat mixed democratic causes and the need to reform some aspects of the Nasirist experiment with reactionary apostasy and an assault on the liberation and progress experiment established by 'Abd-al-Nasir. Al-Sadat mixed independence in dealing with the Soviet Union with actual bias towards the United States.

Al-Sadat mixed a number of issues, since he did not adopt each one of them in isolation from the others, which to the observer would appear to be legitimate, necessary shortsightedness. But he mixed them in a manner which confused the public mind, and threw it into the whirlpool of destruction, which made it easy for the plotter to gradually carry out the plot, after having smashed, paralyzed or isolated the forces which might have resisted, one by one.

Al-Sadat succeeded in this because he was able to skillfully confuse, mislead and fragment all the patriotic Egyptian, Arab nationalist, and international forces and elements which opposed his real intentions, while simultaneously working to bring together, strengthen, and coordinate the Egyptian, Arab and international forces and elements which stood alongside him in these intentions. In so doing, he made use of individuals, parties, movements, leaders and states, each one of which discovered

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after a while that he had been used for some other end than he had initially supposed he was working for.

There is another historical example which this generation might remember. In the Fifties, there were two fronts on the Arab scene, one of which was reactionary and linked with western colonialism, calling for joining forces with western military alliances, led by the regime of Nuri Sa'id of Iraq. The second front was the nationalist one, opposed to colonialist domination and influence and military alliances, calling for liberation and neutrality, and led by 'Abd-al-Nasir of Egypt.

Bitter political, propaganda and combat struggles broke out between the two fronts, and no one doubted the strength and tyranny of the reactionary, colonialist front.

But in spite of this, because of the clarity of the battle and the distance between the trenches, the Arab liberation movement advanced and became stronger, and thwarted attempts to spread the Baghdad Alliance to the other countries of the region. It was able to realize a great historical achievement with the union of Egypt and Syria and the establishment of the United Arab Republic. In July 1958, the Iraqi revolution took place, and swept away the regime of Nuri Sa'id and the Baghdad Alliance. At that hour of Arab history, the Arab nationalist felt that they had attained a high degree of strength in confronting the agent colonialist forces in the Arab world and the region, and that broad horizons on the road to liberation, progress and unity had opened out before them. But let us look at how matters progressed.

Among Arab nationalist force circles there were many opinions about the prevailing conditions in the United Arab Republic, from the standpoint of government, democratic options, and other matters. But nevertheless, those devoted to the cause of unity felt that the United Arab Republic, as a major Arab force which had sprung up in modern history, at the very least constituted potentials for a strong barrier to Zionist aggression.

When the Iraqi revolution took place, which without a doubt was a national anti-colonialist revolution, the Arab nationalist forces immediately raised the question of unity between Iraq and the United Arab Republic. But 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim, along with the Iraqi communists and all the regional, popular and reactionary forces and elements, in turn brought up the question of democracy.

It cannot be disputed that democracy is a legitimate, essential question in the Arab struggle, but the parties to this alliance placed democracy in a trench opposed to nationalism and unity with the United Arab Republic. With the help of Arab parties and international forces, they launched a large-scale war against the United Arab Republic, 'Abd-al-Nasir, Arab nationalism, and nationalist forces in Iraq, especially the Ba'th Party. A complicated situation of card-shuffling and trench-encroaching arose, and devoted Arab citizens became misled and confused, between

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their awareness of the importance of unity and their need for democracy. They also became lost in a vortex of struggles in which the side of truth did not appear to be completely or wholly on one side or the other.

The practical result of this card-shuffling was that the plan for unity between Iraq and the United Arab Republic was foiled, and very severe blows were delivered to the nationalist forces in Iraq, led by the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, after which the question of democracy was finished with.

In Iraq a tyrannical military dictatorship prevailed, and on the other side the separatists, who had benefitted greatly from the struggle of the Qasimist authorities, the communists and their allies against the United Arab Republic, succeeded in carrying out the separatist plot.

Thus the Arab nation found that 3 years after the Iraqi revolution, after all conditions had become ripe for the Arab revolutionary movement to advance and become more widespread, Egyptian-Syrian unity was lost, as was democracy in Iraq, to the benefit of no one except colonialism and Zionism.

This is something which we must not forget when we are dealing with present conditions. Although the phenomena and the actors differ superficially from those of the past, the basic facts remain fixed.

The two examples we mentioned might help us perceive the right path, and differentiate between what is beneficial and harmful at the present time among the piles of contradictory stands and the shuffled cards.

What are the dangers threatening the Arab nation at present, and how can we explain, in the context of these conditions, the behavior of the Iranian leaders vis-a-vis the Arab causes, and in particular against Iraq and its revolutionary, nationalist leadership?

Nowadays this issue stirs up many questions, sharp debate revolves around it, and an extensive, complicated card-shuffling operation is in progress around it. But in spite of this complicated picture, I suppose that the devoted nationalist forces can tell the difference between a mistake and a correct action, and can find the right path, if they go back to their original sources and try to recall their former bitter experiences and the warnings and lessons they came away with.

The Arab nation has many problems and sharp political and social contradictions, and there are still conflicting class conditions and widespread corruption, especially in some regimes. There are many forms of foreign influence and instances of backwardness in many fields, as far as one can see.

But in the context of this situation as a whole, in which the opinions and stands on how to deal with and confront the various intellectual and political parties, movement and trends vary greatly, there is a consensus, or a near consensus, on the most dangerous thing facing the Arab nation at

the present time--the presence of the Zionist entity and its continually escalating peril to the Arab nation, and the presence of foreign influences and their continually growing danger to the Arab nation.

Then came the crude betrayal of the Arab cause by the al-Sadat regime, and the concomitant results so dangerous to the balance of the struggle between the Arab nation on the one hand and the Zionist enemy on the other hand. There is also consensus or near consensus on the need to confront these dangers with a unified Arab stand.

What are the circumstances and stands which weaken this confrontation, and what are those which will strengthen it?

When al-Sadat signed the Camp David agreements, a serious situation arose on the Arab scene, along with wide-scale unasiness and extreme fear of the possibility that the Camp David plot might spread to other countries. Some parties called for throwing oneself into the arms of foreign strategies in order to confront the American-Zionist-Sadatist plot, and there were many cases of despair and discouragement.

The end result of this situation was extremely negative. If it had continued for a long time, the danger resulting from al-Sadat's treachery would have been aggravated, and the American-Zionist-Sadatist alliance would have grown.

At that time, Iraq and its nationalist leaders played a part which many people, even those who don't like Iraq and its programs, recognized as a historic, nationalist role.

Iraq, which previously had never dealt with Arab summit formulas, convened the Baghdad summit conference, and after a complicated political struggle was able to come away from the conference with a nationalist stand expressing a minimum position, but permitting whoever so desired to adopt a more advanced stand. Similarly, room remained to develop it.

When the peace agreements between al-Sadat and the Zionist entity were signed on 26 March 1979, Iraq, which also hosted the Arab Foreign and Economy Ministers conference, was able, after a hard and complicated political struggle, to provide the right circumstances for the issuance of resolutions which were of higher quality and further-reaching than the resolutions of the summit which had preceded them by a few months.

Thus an appropriate Arab stand against al-Sadat's treachery was formed, and through the development of its positive elements it enabled forward progress, although slowly. Although it did not satisfy the aspirations of the revolutionary nationalists, who demanded a maximum program, it constituted a position relatively more advanced than that which might have arisen if it has not been for the Baghdad summit and its results.

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The greatest benefit realized at the Baghdad summit was that it succeeded very well in sorting the cards which al-Sadat had shuffled and the trenches which he had made encroach on each other when he sunk to the lowest level of treachery. After the Baghdad summit, it became plain to the Arab and the Egyptian masses, as well as to Islamic and general Third World public opinion and on the international level, that there were two diverse stands--one of them adopted by al-Sadat and the other adopted by the majority of the Arab nation.

The clarity which characterized the Baghdad summit enabled the Arab nation, during a few months of political and diplomatic activity, to isolate al-Sadat on the Arab level and in the Islamic milieu and the non-aligned movement, which then led to a significant weakening of his position in Africa, and prevented the formation of a cohesive western European stand in his favor. In fact, the European stands have become relatively close to the Baghdad summit trends.

All of this was reflected in the progress of the Camp David agreements, which became more difficult and complicated. It was also reflected in the position of the al-Sadat regime within Egypt. His deceptive influence over the Egyptian public diminished, and his political, economic and security crises became aggravated, all of which were extremely important results with respect to the Arab-Zionist struggle. It is true that this struggle was not resolved by a magic stroke--which in such struggles is basically impossible--but it readjusted the entire situation, however slightly, in favor of the Arabs.

Under these circumstances the Shah of Iran fell, and the new leaders came to power in Iran.

We shall not enter here into an evaluation of what happened in Iran, and whether it was a revolution or just a popular outbreak. We shall not argue about the essence and consequences of the revolution, but shall deal only with the connection between the stands taken by the Iranian leaders and the circumstances of the Arab nation and its struggle against Zionism, al-Sadat's treachery, and imperialist plots.

If we go back to those days to review the events, we find that the Iranian leadership circles began launching attacks against Iraq since the first days. This fact must be pointed out, because some people imagine, or try to imagine, that the so-called Iraqi-Iranian dispute arose recently.

To prove what I am saying, I quote some passages from a series of articles published in the Iraqi newspaper AL-THAWRAH in 12, 13 and 14 June 1979, dealing with Iraqi-Iranian relations. They say:

"Once again the skies of relations between Iraq and Iran have become overcast, and the Iranian radio and press have resumed their attacks on Iraq, the Iraqi leadership, and the revolutionary party in Iraq, after having been silent for over 4 years.

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"Why is this happening, when in Iran there was a revolution against the Shah, who from 1969 to 1975 was openly and violently hostile towards Iraq, the Iraqi leadership, and the party of the revolution in Iraq, and who afterwards behaved, politically, militarily and in all other spheres, in such a manner as to restrict the Iraqi movement and prevent it from bursting forth, with all its great potentials, on the Arab nationalist scene?

"This is a big question which must be answered frankly and clearly, so that we may cross our t's and dot our i's and look out for obstacles before the situation gets worse. Before that, when the Shah began to propagandistically, politically and militarily provoke Iraq, we said that it was in the interest of Iran, Iraq and all the countries of the region that the relations between these two neighboring countries not deteriorate. We said that wisdom demands that they both look for a sound formula for mutual relations, and to look more for commonalities than for what differentiates them.

"But the Shah was immersed in illusion, and thought that he was strong and capable of continuing the game. In fact, his deception led him to imagine himself capable of changing political conditions in Iraq, and in 1970 he embarked on his well-known plots with his remnants of traitors and mercenaries, whose rotten heads the revolution chopped off. His ambition to impose his authority on the region deluded him; the hatreds of ancient history deluded him; the international forces' aspirations to dominate the region by spreading warfare and tension among the region's countries deluded him. He played the game, confident that he would win. The years went by, one by one, and the Shah's plotting against Iraq intensified, until it reached the point of direct warfare at times and indirect warfare at other times.

"If we look back on history and listen to what the radio, press and leaders of Tehran said, we find that the most significant sign which the Shah's government in Iran carried against Iraq at that time was the sign of religion, and that the most important tools which he used against Iraq were some people who were proteges of the religious men. We must remember this fact in all its details, because the strange thing about the matter is that the game is being repeated, although the players differ!

"At that time, power in Tehran was in the hands of those who were sympathetic, friendly and brotherly towards the more distant Arabs, while simultaneously inflicting harm on the nearby Arabs. At the same time the Shah was establishing relations of friendship and firm alliance with many Arab rulers, he was intensifying his plots against Iraq and sending his military forces to occupy the Arab islands in the Gulf--the Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Abu Musa.

"We must also remember this fact, because history is on the verge of repeating itself in Iran, although we are not saying that it will do so using the same methods!"

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The article also says, "When the Iranian revolution succeeded,, Iraq expressed its delight at this success, as well as its desire to establish good relations with Iran, in a memorandum sent to the Iranian Government.

"Iraq wanted to confirm this stand by an official memorandum, so as to derermine the sound, clear bases for relations between it and Iran.

"Iraq's stand on Iran and what was happening did not resemble the stands of others in the other Arab countries. For, in addition to everything in common between the Arabs and Iran, there is a neighboring border between Iraq and Iran which stretches for hundreds of kilometers, and there are immediately mutual interests. Cooperation between the two will achieve immediately positive results, and a dispute between them will lead to immediately negative results as well.

"For this reason, Iraq wanted to confirm its stand on the Iranian revolution in a frank, unequivocal memorandum.

"But ever since the early days of the Iranian revolution, we began hearing statements and reading things in the newspapers which wronged Iraq.

"At the time we said that Iran was going through unsettled circumstances, that there were many trends, wings and blocs there, that no doubt there were some people who wanted to fish in troubled waters, and that we must not forget imperialism and its agents--and so on with other excuses. We were silent and we bore it.

"But silence did not stop the offenses; in fact, they began to increase and become more insolent day by day. Perhaps the circles which were playing this role imagined that silence was weakness.

"This time we took notice officially. Our embassy in Tehran consulted with the Iranian Foreign Ministry, brought its attention to these offenses and behavior harmful to Iraq, and asked the meaning of this conduct. We received answers which were full of obscurity, procrastination, and unconvincing excuses.

"But it was remarkable that the greater part of the direct and indirect offenses came from the group subservient to Khomeyni. In recent days, the offenses have reached a very squalid level, as represented by the statement by Ahmed Madani and some Iranian officials. Also, Iranian radio has begun launching an organized propaganda campaign against Iraq.

"We have to ask: Why?

"If the Iranian revolution is an anti-imperialist revolution, and if it has a program independent of East and West, then the people closest to it geographically and who share this independent stand are the Iraqis. Iraq is a key fortress in the struggle against imperialism in the region. It is struggling against it obstinantly, in order to become the greatest

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thorn in the side of imperialist plots. Iraq is a country completely independent of all international blocs, and it is only natural for people with stands in common to get together.

"If the Iranian revolution is, in one respect, a revolution for the size of Palestine, as has been said in some statements, then the Arab state which the Palestinian struggle needs most at the present time is Iraq, for Iraq is the largest country in the Arab East, and the mightiest from the manpower, military and economic standpoints, among others. Without it, the strategic gap in the Arab nation's struggle with the Zionist enemy and imperialism, resulting from the treachery of Egypt's ruler, cannot be plugged. Is this devotion to Palestine comparable to Iraq's works, which Palestine needs more?

"If the Iranian revolution is an ally of the Arabs, the first Arabs it ought to ally with are the Iraqi Arabs, because they are neighbors, and are the closest. It makes no sense to say honeyed words about the remoter Arabs, while the atmosphere is full of scheming and slander against the closer Arabs, and then to say: We are the Arabs' ally. What do the distant Arabs profit from good words, when the closer Arabs are subjected to direct harm?"

We quote these texts as a reminder, so that we don't forget that at the time (June 1979) of these words, which were a wise and responsible response on the part of the Iraqi leadership to the campaigns launched by the rulers of the Baghdad summit and the need to develop them and Iraq's effective role in that. Also, Iraqi-Syrian relations, which arose from the National Action charter, were still in existence, along with all the hopes and nationalist aspirations for unity and joint action against the Sadatist-Zionist alliance.

At that very time, the Iranian attacks on Iraq broke out, and the Arab and regional scene began to see a new attempt to shuffle the cards and make the trenches encroach on each other.

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BRIEFS

TWO ABU DHABI FUND LOANS--The Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development approved on 28 April 1980 in Abu Dhabi a loan of \$17.5 million to Mauritania to help restore the balance in Mauritania's balance of payments account. This loan is reimbursable in 5 years and carries an annual interest rate of 5.2 to 6.4 percent. Furthermore, the Mauritanian Council of Ministers meetings of 25 and 26 April 1980 approved a draft decree authorizing the ratification of the loan agreement of 15 February 1980 between Mauritania and the Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development. This loan for an amount equivalent to \$3 million is slated for the financing of the deficit in Mauritania's balance of payments account. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 16 May 80 p 1149] 2662

SAUDI ARABIAN COOPERATION--A delegation of the Saudi Development Fund consisting of three experts paid a visit to Nouakchott from 24 to 29 April 1980. This visit fell within the framework of the follow-up of the economic and social projects financed in Mauritania by Saudi Arabia. A meeting was devoted to the questions relative to the financing of the project of the second section of the Route de l'Espoir [road] linking Kiffa and Nema. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 16 May 80 p 1149] 2662

LIBYAN COOPERATION PROJECTS--At the invitation of Oumar Soumare, Mauritanian minister of fishing and maritime economy, the Libyan acting minister of rural development, Dr Amer Ahmed el-Maghcy, secretary of the general people's committee in charge of light industries, paid a visit to Mauritania at the head of an important delegation from 17 to 22 April 1980. The talks bore on bilateral relations in the fields of fishing, maritime economy, and rural development. Within the framework of this visit the general assembly of the Mauritanian-Libyan Arab Maritime Fishing Company held its second meeting. The two parties agreed in fact that the company needs a vigorous incentive so that it may effectively undertake its activities and thus meet the aims present at its creation because these goals represent the essential factors of Mauritanian-Libyan cooperation in the field of maritime fishing. In the field of rural development the two sides stressed the importance of the Mauritanian-Libyan Arab Agricultural Development Company so that the latter may undertake in short order the accomplishment of its social purpose in the mutual interest of the two countries. Finally,

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the Libyan minister of light industries confirmed the agreement of his government to participate in the financing of the black Gorgol project for an amount of \$10 million. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 2 May 80 p 1035] 2662

OPEC FUND LOANS--Under the terms of an agreement signed on 25 April 1980 in Vienna between the OPEC Fund and the Mauritanian Government, the Fund is loaning to Mauritania for 10 years an amount of \$5.5 million interest-free to restore the balance of its balance of payments account. This loan had been announced at the conclusion of the meeting of the Fund's governors on 28 March 1980. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 2 May 80 p 1035] 2662

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ALGERIA

CHADLI BENJADID SEEN CONSOLIDATING POWER

Paris JEUNE-AFRIQUE in French 28 May 80 pp 44-45

[Article by Jean-Louis Buchet]

[Text] Will Chadli Bendjadid finally assume the reins of authority 15 months after his election to the presidency of the republic (7 February 1979)? He seems to be headed in the right direction. In fact, it was learned on 14 May that he had received carte blanche from the Central Committee of the FLN (National Liberation Front, the single party) to carry out the "changes he considers necessary" at the head of the party and the state. However, although Chadli has scored some points, he has not yet won the game. Everything leads one to believe that the test of strength which was avoided in February 1979, will take place before the party's extraordinary congress scheduled for the middle of June.

Relaxation

Of course, after the death of Boumediene, Colonel Chadli won out in the battle of succession, thanks in particular to the support of the army vis-a-vis Abdelaziz Bouteflika and Mohamed Salah Yahiaoui. However, he had to make accommodations. The barons of the regime were of a mind that they would share in the authority. Naturally, in this new equilibrium some fared better than others. That was the case of Yahiaoui, who was appointed FLN coordinator (with Chadli as the secretary general) and veritable No 2 man in the government. However, no one was sidelined.

Thus, Abdelaziz Bouteflika lost foreign affairs but became minister counselor to the presidency. The position was eliminated in November 1979, in disgrace, it was said. Nevertheless, he remained a member of the Politburo. And, even more recently, commenting on the third session of the Central Committee (3-7 May), the government newspaper, EL MOUDJAHID, published the photo of an anonymous member of congress who was none other than the former "head man" of the diplomatic corps taking with Ali Kafi, one of the principal guerrilla leaders during the war and ambassador to Tunis.

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Another example: Belaid Abdesselam himself, the father of heavy industry, whose setbacks were underscored with delight (JEUNE-AFRIQUE, No 1004). Having already withdrawn at the end of Boumediene's rule, he was not a member of the Chadli government. However, he was appointed to head an FLN "economic committee." More generally, all of the major factions are represented within the 17-member Politburo. Therefore, no fighting is taking place but skirmishes between factions, clans and lobbies in which everyone is preparing for battle. Result: the paralysis of authority in the multiplication of authorities.

Is Chadli aware of the fact that since February 1979 a change in direction in the economic sector has been necessary? Does he want to give a chance to a new team of technocrats? It is said that he does. But what resistance! Abdesselam and his last faithful followers are defending the heritage with the energy of despair. Yahiaoui and his partisans, haughty guardians of the other school of thought [option] (socialist, of course). The administration and the big companies are playing the game of inertia. Even so, the enormous SONATRACH has been split into four companies, a way of breaking up the fiefs of the past. Announcement has been made of a few timid measures, the outline of a hypothetical liberalization. And it has been decided to decide on nothing.

The Symbol

Is the chief of state thinking of making political life more relaxed? He says so. The official tone is becoming more open. The house arrests which had been imposed upon Ferhat Abbas and Ben Khedda since 1976 were lifted; political prisoners are being freed. There are talks with members of the opposition. On 4 July 1979, the release of Ben Bella was announced. In fact, the former president was exiled to M'Sila (250 kilometers from Algiers) and placed under forced residence within the limits of the wilaya (department). In his case, authority was manifestly divided. And his case symbolizes the entire situation: as a function of the present balance of forces, his status becomes more relaxed or deteriorates. However, nearly 11 months later, Ben Bella still is not free.

Significant Measures

Thus, hope is followed by disappointment. All the more quickly because the dossiers of suffering are not negligible. Economic strategy, of course. But also very serious social problems: supplies [of goods], housing, etc. The future of young people, eternally excluded by the system, who are no longer accepting this and are asking questions. One day, it was the "Arabizing" students who went on strike. They were protesting in fact against the disparity between what was being said--priority to Arabization--and reality--the absence of initiatives, the influence of French. No open repression. But no solution either. The authorities contented themselves with reaffirming the Arabness of Algeria. Then the Kabyles exploded: the cup was too full. "Muscle" repression. Solution? Not at all, since there is no Berber problem officially. With regard to the Tizi-Ouzou

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incidents, even in government circles contradictory explanations are offered: student revolt by some, foreign plot others say. Different ways of looking at things, different clans, different ways of viewing an event.

Elsewhere, on the other hand, things move along of their own accord. There where things are organized. The secret services, for example, with the Gafsa coup, carried out an operation set up in Boumediene's time! After the 27 January 1980 attack, Chadli was informed, with supporting evidence, by the Tunisians, of Algerian participation--Slimane Hoffman, the head of the FLN's foreign relations was directly implicated. Similarly, it seems, surrounded for years, the Algerian military "correspondents" of the POLISARIO are continuing their work without referring to Algiers. Without political control, therefore. This could have serious consequences. If the Moroccan offensive dislodges the Saharans from their bases in the Ouarkiz, what should be done? Intervene or not? The answer cannot be "technical."

On the evidence, things could not continue in this way. Has Chadli known how to take advantage of the divisions, profit from the various crises, turn his position to good account? That is what the measures announced on 14 May seem to indicate, 1 week after the end of the third session of the central committee. In addition to the full powers accorded Chadli to "reorganize," the Politburo is losing all decision-making authority, and it is being intimated that the party's committees will be dissolved. The preparation of the congress has been conferred upon a 21-member committee placed under the authority of the chief of state, in which no representative of the Politburo has membership. The same is true of a second 16-member committee which is responsible for the preparation of modifications of statutes. What is noted? The absence from both committees of personalities belonging to such-or-such clan, the presence of persons close to Chadli, including many military men. After 15 months, the army seems to be coming back to the scene once again. Reportedly, the big losers are Abdesselam (particularly criticized by the Central Committee), Bouteflika and even Kasdi Merbah, former chief of military security and present secretary general of the Ministry of Defense.

Nothing Accomplished

One could believe that the resumption of troubles in Algiers (then in Tizi-Ouzou) have led Chadli to accelerate a coup that he has been preparing for some time. It remains to be seen whether he is going to increase his advantage. Or whether his adversaries will engage in a counteroffensive. So long as the principal potential strong men are not definitively sidelined and so long as the president has not installed his team, nothing will be accomplished. The existence of a restricted four-member committee has been announced by certain sources: Rabah Bitat (president of the National Assembly, former acting president), Mohamed Benyahia (present head of the diplomatic corps), Col Abdallah Belhouchat (army inspector general) and Mohamed Salah Yahiaoui which would seem to indicate the maintenance of the Chadli-Yahiaoui adversary alliance.

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ALGERIA

CHAPTER FROM HARBI BOOK TRACES BERBER MOVEMENT

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 23 Apr 80 pp 62-65

[Extract of book by Mohamed Harbi under article title: "The History of Berberism"]

[Text] This May, JEUNE AFRIQUE publishers will put out a book which will certainly prove to be a milestone: "The FLN: Mirage and Reality," by Mohamed Harbi. The author is not unknown. Forty-seven years old, living in exile since 1973, he has been active in the ranks of Algerian nationalism since his teens.

He has already published "At the Start of the FLN" (Paris, Bourgois, 1975).

His next book is a detailed history of Algerian nationalism, from the North African Star to the MTLD (Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties in Algeria), of Messali Hadj, and from him to Ben Bella, at the time of independence. Thumbing his nose at the official histories and basing himself on a great number of unpublished documents. Mohamed Harbi lifts the curtain from around the internal battles which shook Algerian nationalism from 1945 to 1962. The pages which you will read here are Chapter 4, entitled "The Development of the Berberist Movement and the Crisis of 1949." You will see that they are not unrelated to events presently brewing.

Centralizer, ultraradical, Messalism at first asserted the cultural unity of Algeria. In that view, individualism and the reality of cultural and linguistic differences appeared to it merely as holdovers maintained by the colonial power for its own benefit.

It thus overestimated the cultural unity of Algeria and did not face up to realities. Even looking only at Mزاب and Kabylia, their uniqueness is

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undeniable. The individualism is even more pronounced in Great Kabylia, a rural region split off in a defensive posture and closed in on itself. With colonization, the feeling of regional belonging took on importance and was charged with a new meaning. With the many-fold increase in exchanges due to the capitalist penetration, small, closed, isolated universes opened to ideas from the outside world. Bastion of poverty, Kabylia exported its men for survival to France and to the interior of Algeria. In the Algerian plains and cities, they often ran up against a habit of distrust and dislike which people felt toward them because of their social position position and their distinctiveness. Feelings of regional belonging grew stronger. Nationalist against the French, Kabylia found itself regionalist in face of the Arabic speaking Algerians, even if, by the force of events, it remained united. To the very considerable differences in the way of life and customs from one region of the country to another, in Kabylia is added the linguistic factor--the resistance of the Berber language to arabization and the existence of an oral literature, which is very much alive.

The mixing of peoples united by a common reaction to colonial domination cannot occur without major disputes if one ignores the individual histories of the regions which comprise the country. One may ask why the regional question caused a crisis in Messalism and not in the other movements. The answer is easy. The Algerian Communist Party (PCA) recognized the Berber uniqueness, even though it wrongly put it on the same level with that of the European minority. The bourgeois parties, movements of notable persons, were regionalist by definition and had no organization on a national scale. Within the Algerian Peoples Party (PPA), the combination of an absence of democracy, political impasse and an orientation in which Arabism and Islam took the place of any platform were to sidetrack the debates on the regional problem after World War II.

Is Algeria an Arab-Muslim state? Should one define it by the Arabic language and the Muslim religion? The question is not new in the Messalist movement. It had already been raised in 1936 among the Algerian emigrants in France, during the battles between Messali and one of his lieutenants, Amar Imache. Messali was pushing for the idea of an Algerian parliament, while Imache stuck to the traditional program of the North African Star (ENA), i.e. independence. Messali had proposed the idea of an Algerian parliament to defuse the critics of the Popular Front parties and their allies within the Muslim Congress. Although the antagonism between the two men was political, it gave rise to a regional alignment. In fact, Imache had behind him only the Algerians of Kabylia, whereas Messali collected activists from all regions. The same cleavage was to be found during World War II, when the leaders in Paris, among them Si Djilani (1), and Khider Amar (2), natives of Kabylia, were shut out for wanting to involve the PPA on the side of Germany.

After 1945, the Berberist movement gained support due to three basic factors: the sequels to the fights between Messali and his Kabyle rivals

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since 1936, the rapid expansion of nationalism in Kabylia and among the emigrants in France, and the tactical errors made by the leadership of the PPA with regard to the insurrection question. But this time, the common folk joined with a group of intellectuals who put the Berber problem into a linguistic and cultural context. With World War II, the PPA in Kabylia benefited from the return of numerous emigrants, the first who had been won over to nationalism and had been involved in the life of the North African Star. For this reason, the political and organizational level was higher than in other regions. In the areas of Oran, Setif and Mitidja, the internal Kabyle migration cut the path for implantation of the PPA.

The widespread conviction in Kabylia that it was politically ahead of the other regions of the country was manifested by a certain pride. One was no longer ashamed to be a Kabyle. In Algiers and elsewhere, people began to proclaim their regional membership openly. They sang the national anthem in Berber. Onto this general atmosphere were to be grafted a certain number of events and situations.

In 1945, at the PPA organization committee, Bennai Ouali demanded the unification of the entire Berber speaking zone into a single region. To support his proposal, he cited the human and linguistic relationships existing between the populations of the two sides of the Djurdjura. The leadership refused. People were already talking about the Kabyle regionalism.

In September 1945, the leadership of the PPA ordered the district of Kabylia to kill the candidates in the elections. The region was in the grip of repression. Dozens of activists had taken to the bush. The organization was dismantled. District chief Sid Ali Halit, the chiefs of the Dra-el-Mizan region, Mohand Aouchiche, and of the Azefoun region, Mohand Boudjemaa, were in the hands of the police. Also, the district committee rejected the order. A village leader justified this attitude: "If we kill the candidates, the French will burn our villages. Do we have the means to stop them? Are we going to evacuate the villages to flee into the mountains? If we did, would we be able to face the army which would come to drive us out? How and with what? We can shoot and take to the bush if the party has planned holy war as the next stage."

In face of the refusal of the district committee, the PPA leadership called directly to Algiers to the chief of the Dellys-Tigzirt region, Zeroual, and invited him to take action. Zeroual obeyed. With Mohand Said Mazouzi (3) and Omar Haddad, he organized an attack against the bachagha Ait Ali, near Tigzirt in Kabylia. The attempt failed. Zeroual and Mazouzi were arrested. When the members of the district committee realized that the order to assassinate the candidates had been used only in Kabylia (4), some felt that the fate of the populations under their charge was being given short shrift. To these facts was added the inadequacy of the leadership organization of the PPA with regard to the quantitative and qualitative change occurring in Kabylia, where many students had rejoined the party.

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They held group discussions on the tactical and strategic problems of the national revolution and constituted a brain trust for the common people cadres of the region.

On the press committee of the newspaper EL MAGHRIB EL ARABI (5), directed by Ben Youssef Ben Khedda, the militants from Kabylia were in the majority. Beside Ben Khedda, there were Temam, Belhocine, Henine and Amioud. Their political and doctrinal demands were great. Influenced by Marxism, they tried to give nationalism a rational underpinning, and found it too simplistic to define the Algerian nation by the Arabic language and the Muslim religion, too simplistic to reduce party propaganda to exaltation of the role of its leader, Messali. They also refused to devote a brochure to him as the leadership wanted. The Kabyle militants were likewise shocked when Ben Khedda refused to publish an article celebrating the victory of Mao Zedong in China, claiming that the natural partners of the party were in the Nationalist camp.

The Berber cultural question brought out important problems which had not been touched at the congress of February 1947: What nationalism for the liberation of Algeria, and with which allies? Muddled by the newness of the problems, the leadership refused all discussion. The opponents then questioned the internal functioning of the party, the absence of democracy, the promotion of the most conformist elements. From November 1946 to March 1949, distrust grew more and more and overburdened relations at all levels of the machine. The successive arrests of Amar Ould Hamouda, Omar Oussedik and Omar Boudaoud (6) were to fan the embers. Some students, Ait Medir Hadjeres (7) and Mebrouk Belhocine were convinced that they had been handed over to the police.

A question arose: Was the Berberist movement formed as a faction within the PPA to develop a concerted policy at all levels? Messali answered in the affirmative: "Thanks to the Lamine-Bouda clan, the Berberists, big and small, penetrated into the body of the party, a little all over like a germ in an already weakened body. They moved around easily and thus went on to sow the virus all over France In reality, for a certain period, they were the masters of the party."

Certainly, the documents seized by the police on Bennai Ouali, arrested in Oran as he was leaving for France on behalf of the party, prove the existence of a faction. But the question is not exhausted just by that: we don't know when that faction was formed or for what purposes. On these precise points, the available documents do not allow us to reach a decision. And it is the attitude of the protagonists versus the PPA leadership that enables us to judge the purposes of the Berber movement. This movement was not homogeneous, its tactics and its goals were not the same among the Algerian emigrants in France and in Algeria.

In France, Rachid Ali Yahia, elected to the federal committee by the congress of November 1948 and supported by Bennai Ouali and Amar Ould Hamouda,

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leaned toward the creation of a Berber Peoples Movement (MPB) and launched his partisans into a test of force with the leadership of the PPA-MTLD. Out of 32 members of the federal committee, 28 rejected any idea of an Arab and Muslim Algeria and stood up for the concept of an Algerian Algeria. The crisis grew when the PPA began a fund-raising drive for Palestine. Rachid Ali Yahia opposed it. From the defense of Berber individuality, they were very quickly slipping toward a hostility toward all things Arab.

In April 1949, the PPA leadership reacted, announced the dissolution of the France federation, and instructed Belkacem Radjeff (8), Captain Saidi Sadok and Chawki Mostefai, all Berber speaking, to get things under control. The confrontation began with the attempt by loyalists to occupy the party offices located at 13 rue Bisson, in the 20th arrondissement of Paris. They were particularly violent in Rouen, where Mohamed Khider (same name as the "historical chief of the FLN," assassinated in Madrid in 1967), a deputy and member of the political bureau, was beaten and a dozen militants were hospitalized.

The implantation in France of the Berberist current gives us an idea of the Algerian regions which were the most receptive to the question of the Berber identity. This current was powerfully represented in the Paris region and in all the locations where the immigrants were natives of Fort-National and Ain el Hammam (Michelet). The strongholds of the Berber current were in Saint-Denis, Saint-Ouen, Puteaux, Nanterre, Courbevoie and the 18th arrondissement of Paris. In places where the immigrants came from Tazmalt and from the Guergour (in particular in the 19th and 20th arrondissements of Paris), it didn't take hold. In the south of France, in Meurthe-et-Moselle and in the north--regions directed by Bachir Boumaaza and Bourzah, both natives of Little Kabylia--the impact of the Berberist current was zero. The movement definitely drew all its strength from Great Kabylia.

It is useful to note the milieux in which the ideologists of the Berberist movement were recruited. Some of them, such as Ould Hamouda and Omar Oussedik, were products of the Bouzareah Teachers' College. They were profoundly influenced by its teaching and, despite a deep attachment to the cause of the people, they remained elitist and displayed an aggressive secularization. Others, like Ali Yahia Rachid, came from families of French citizenship. They must have suffered in their youth the injuries inflicted by a society hostile to anything connected with the community ideal, because it confused nationality with religion. They reacted in a variety of ways, some by seeking refuge in religious devotion, others by openly attacking Islam.

Beginning in France in January, the 1949 crisis spread to Algeria in March. At that time, only Ait Ahmed was still free. The other members of the central committee, Bennai Ouali, Ould Hamouda, Oussedik were in prison. Ait Ahmed took the route of posing the problems within the party

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and rejected any initiative which could lead to a chism or even to Berber separatism at the national level. In this spirit, he differed from Bennai Ouali, while refusing to censure him as Messali and Lahousel wanted. He won over to his ideas Amar Ouamrane and Cheikh Amar (9), both future officers of the ALN (National Liberation 9), both an activist from the OS (Special Organization), Khelifati, to France to tell Chadid Ali Yahia that discussion of the cultural problem would only lead to an impasse. The Kabylia guerrillas supported the leadership. Krim shot at Ferhat Ali, one of the fiercest adversaries of Messali, and wounded him. Kabylia would remain Messalist.

Thoroughly intertwining the political problems and the Berber cultural question, the 1949 crisis had grave consequences for the future of popular nationalism. In France, the PPA federation lost its autonomy. Its leaders were thereafter appointed and no longer elected. They continued a delegation which took orders from the party administration in Algiers. There was no ethnic split in the party. The majority still remained Berber, but the suppression of the democratic structures was to prevent the worker emigrants from freely expressing themselves and influencing its orientation.

The leadership organizations underwent major changes:

In the political bureau, a new majority was formed. By cooperation, the losers at the 1947 congress came into the central committee, which was reformed. Excluded were Bennai Ouali, Ould Hamouda, Ossedik and, despite his slightly differing positions, Ait Ahmed. The OS sections in Kabylia, which Ould Hamouda directed, were disbanded. Ait Ahmed was replaced at the head of the OS by Ben Bella. Dr Lamine Debaghine was isolated. The alliances of Messali and his refusal to take under consideration the regional question in Kabylia (10) had the logical result that the purge was used not only against the cadres of that region but also against the radical coalition which in February 1947, had elevated Lamine Debaghine to the top ranks. Messali only won in appearance, because he became the leader of a coalition where the reformists were more numerous.

The PPA and the MTLN merged. Only the paramilitary organization (the OS) kept its clandestine character.

The "Berberist" current dispersed. Upon his exit from prison, Bennai Ouali went to France, made contact with the PCF (French Communist Party) and asked them, but without success, to assist him in creating a national progressive party. The failure of this attempt signaled the dispersion. One part of the militants joined the PCA or the PCF (11), another part was to play the role of fellow travelers.

In analyzing these itineraries, one notes that these militants who demanded democracy and armed revolution joined up with the parties who did not go along with either one or the other. If they were looking there for a

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recognition of Berber individuality, a doctrine independent of religion, they did not find the political satisfactions that they were expecting, because after November 1954 they flocked back en masse to the FLN.

However, their path and their excesses of language against religion gave the PPA-MTLD an a posteriori justification when they were depicted as the PCA's Trojan horse in the Messalist movement. Thereafter, the label of "Berber materialist" would form an effective barrage against any rationalist current and a weapon used by all climbers to derail their rivals.

The crisis of 1949 wiped out the hopes of seeing a radical nationalism develop independently of religious faith. The adventure of Bennai Ouali, of Ali Yahia Rachid locked the battle for the democratization of the PPA-MTLD in an impasse. The rationalist and secular hold on the political problem disappeared thereafter in favor of the mystical approach. The purge of the Berber movement would up by eliminating worthwhile cadres to facilitate the promotion of mediocre ones with connections to the machine and fearing above all to be accused of being materialists and Marxists. The commonfolk chiefs of Kabylia would remain very distrustful of the intellectuals. This attitude would clearly persist within the FLN.

Of all the "Berberist" group, only Ait Ahmed remained in the MTLD. However, henceforth he would be condemned to play no more than a secondary role on the national level: his adversaries in the years 1947-79 did not pardon his haughty intransigence and his lucidity, of which the report to the central committee in December 1948 bears witness. In the micromilieu of consensus which is any political party, these are qualities which climbers and the mediocre scarcely appreciate.

Finally, one last consequence of the crisis of March 1949, and this was the most serious: The only region of the nation where the fusion between the common current and the intellectuals was achieved lost its best elements. There was as a result a lowering of the political level, which would make its effects cruelly felt during the war of liberation. The radical wing of the PPA-MTLD came out of it weakened.

Footnotes

1. Djilani: founding member of the ENA (North African Star) and director of its newspaper. Opposed moving the PPA headquarters to Algeria.
2. Khider Amar: a very interesting character, a shepherd in Kabylia, then a seasonal worker, emigrated to France in 1933. Active in the unions. Always belonged to the radical wing. Collaborated with Germany for nationalist reasons.

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3. Mohand Said Mazouzi: Arrested in 1945, released at independence. Responsible for the Tizi-Ouzou federation. Member of the Central Committee of the FLN and deputy (1964-1965). Prefect of Tizi-Ouzou, minister of labor, then of the war veterans. Member of Political Bureau of FLN (1979).
4. Most certainly due to its geographic position.
5. Organ of the PPA, but whose director, sheikh Said Zahiri, did not belong to the party. Accused of being connected with the North African Liaison Service, he was to be executed by the FLN at the beginning of the war.
6. Omar Oussedik was arrested in the Jardin Marengo, Ould Hamouda in a city bus, and Omar Boudaoud getting off a bus in Robeval. Bouadoud was in charge of the FLN France federation from 1957 to 1962. After then, he was a deputy and member of the FLN Central Committee until June 1965.
7. Hadjeres: A physician, belonged to the PCA after 1949. Together with Camille Larribere and Hadj Ali Bachir, directed the PCA during the war. First secretary of the Socialist Vanguard Party (PAGS).
8. Belkacem Radjeff: Joined the ENA in 1933, member of the PPA leadership (1937-1939, then 1947-1954).
9. Cheikh Amar: First chief of the ALN in the Michelet region; at his death was succeeded by Amirouche.
10. In his report to the congress of Hornu, Messali asserted: "I continue to believe that the Berberists were a colonialist creation to destroy Arabism, a force for resistance and permanent combat." But he also noted that the purge had been pushed very far and that it had touched elements which had had nothing to do with the Berber current.
11. Belkacem Benyahia, who in 1962 would be director of EL MOUJAHID, then ambassador to Guinea, to Congo Brazzaville and finally to East Germany, Abbad Ahmed and Smain Menaa.

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IRAQ

DEPUTY PREMIER WRITES ON ARAB-IRANIAN RELATIONS

JN130900 Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 1-15 May 80, pp 14-17

[Article by Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz: "Views on Arab-Iranian Relations"]

[Excerpts] When we use facts and logic to prove that Iraq was not the one that started the dispute between it and Iran, we do not do so to clarify an obscure fact but to appease our conscience and that of our brother Arabs and to remove all possibilities of self blame. Some may say: Why have you ignited a dispute against a nascent revolution which is facing many difficulties and challenges?

The truth is that the Iranian rulers settled this matter themselves when they proudly claimed that they were the ones who intentionally and with premeditation ignited the dispute. They are no longer trying to shroud this matter in secrecy, as they have tried to during past months. They announced this clearly and openly. Their president has stated that they are now trying to "export the Iranian revolution" and that they consider this as vital to the existence and continuity of their revolution. The Iranian president himself has openly stated that he rejects dialog and mediation to settle differences with Iraq.

The campaign Iran has been launching against Iraq is just one of the results of the so-called "exportation of the revolution" plan and does not come in response to a presumed position Iraq has adopted, an act that has been attributed to it or to the ramifications that have engulfed Iraqi-Iranian relations. If this is so, how can we understand this position?

The "Iranian revolution" which won the admiration of many freedom-lovers during the stage of the struggle against the shah, has lost its glamour and has confused its friends even more than its enemies. The current situation created by the Iranian leaders in Iran has produced an arena for ill-omened and dangerous possibilities that constitute threats not only to Iran and its people, who have not enjoyed peace and freedom following many years of oppression, injustice and suppression, but also to the entire area--particularly to the Arab nation which is waging the most delicate and

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fiercest struggle in modern history against the Zionist-imperialist alliance and the treasonous ruler of the largest Arab country.

Some Arab officials and some Arab political quarters are hiding their heads in the sand like the ostrich and acting as if nothing calls for concern or responsible action.

We shall here speak with some frankness, but not brutal frankness, because we do not intend to harm. What we are after is to develop a sincere Arab position on this matter; and we also want to reveal some of the falsehoods but not all the falsehoods in the positions of certain Arabs.

First of all we would like to say that if some believe that the revolution in Iraq, under the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and Saddam Husayn, is apprehensive about its existence due to the so-called exportation of the Iranian revolution, they they are really in error.

The Ba'th Party is not one that has to fear, and Saddam Husayn also is not one to be afraid. If some believe that they can exploit the situation of the sects in Iraq to threaten Iraq's unity or harm the Arabism of Iraq's sons then they are really deluded. Iraq is a country which played a major role in Arab history. Iraq's history shows that it has always been a bastion for Arabism and a defender of Arabism. Had the Arabism of Iraq and that of its sons been fragile, Iraq would have disintegrated centuries ago or it would have disintegrated 20 years ago during 'Abd al-Karim Qasim's reign and the communist surge. Iraq would not have waited another 20 years for the Iranian leaders to harm Iraq's unity and Arabism at a time when it is existing under the Ba'th Party revolution and the leadership of Saddam Husayn.

Iraq, which includes many Islamic sects, various religions and distinguished national characteristics within the national framework, is one cohesive and indivisible unit. Those who think that they can harm Iraq are invited to do so if they wish to try.

The matter is not that the party and the revolution fear for their existence because of what is taking place in Iran, nor do they fear what the Iranian rulers are threatening.

The Pan-Arab responsibility shouldered by Iraq makes it worry about the evils which might threaten the Arab nation as a result of the situation that the Iranian rulers want to impose on the region, and due to the opportunist and contradictory stands of some Arab leaderships and political circles which behave in a way that encourages the Iranian rulers to be vain and to persevere in irresponsible deviation.

Many ruling leaderships and political parties react to the situation in Iran in a way that is not governed by reason. Let us take some examples. Since

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the establishment of the "revolution" in Iran not a day passes without a statement from Khomeyni, Bani-sadr, Qotbzadeh or other Iranian rulers. They denounce and condemn communism, its parties and the Soviet Union. This is known by everybody. On the other hand, you find communist organizations such as Nayif Hawatimah's organization, the Iraqi Communist Party and many others that praise these gentlemen who condemn them. They publish in their press what the Iranian rulers fabricate against the revolution in Iraq, against the revolution's party in Iraq and against Iraq's national revolutionary leadership.

Another example: Iranian information media are launching a venomous and rancorous campaign against the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and against Pan-Arabism. Bani-sadr openly accuses Pan-Arabism of being "Zionist," and levels all sorts of charges against it. In Syria, the regime claims to be the "Arab Socialist Ba'th Party" regime and alleges to be founded on the basis of "Pan-Arabism." However, this regime overlooks the Iranian "ideological" vilifications and allies itself with the Iranian rulers against Iraq.

A third example: Colonel al-Qadhdhafi is charged with liquidating Musa al-Sadr, and the Iranian leaders continue to raise this issue and blackmail the Libyan Government. The issue is no sooner shelved than it is raised again. As soon as Khalkhali "acquits" al-Qadhdhafi of al-Sadr's blood, the Iranians decide to form a high-level Iranian committee to investigate the affair again. Then they postpone the work of this committee and so on. Although the Iranian leaders continue to refuse to establish diplomatic relations with al-Qadhdhafi's state, al-Qadhdhafi continues to sing the praises of the Iranian "revolution" and describes it as an extension of his own revolution.

How do we explain this abnormal state of affairs and what is the purpose of this complicated process of shuffling cards and stances. Is it not odd that the aforementioned three parties--the communists, the Syrian regime and the Libyan regime--claim to be "ideological" systems, while their "ideologies" are vilified day and night by the rulers of the Iranian regime, and these parties behave as if they do not see or hear while they sing the praises of these rulers and their hypocrisy?

We will not bother to explain the stands of these "ideologists." They will have to explain their stands to those who adhere to their "ideologies." However, we feel that this state of affairs encourages the pompous, hysterical and suspect rulers of Iran to go to excesses in their harmful behavior, sick dreams and suspect machinations because, when they are confronted by such models, they cannot tolerate Iraq's Pan-Arab and principled stand which is in harmony with itself, its ideology and the Arab nation's interests.

The Arab masses are suffering from numerous negative aspects. Various forces are allied against them to distort the picture before their eyes, weaken their self-confidence and drag them to dangerous pitfalls. However, despite all the attempts at shuffling cards and stances, these experienced masses can discern the path of good from that of evil and distinguish between truth and lies and between sincerity and falsehood.

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LEBANON

UN, PATRIOTIC FRONT EXPLORE PROBLEMS OF SOUTH

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 3 Apr 80 pp 27-29

[Article: "Sidon Bears the Cross of the Palestinians and the South"]

[Text] Beirut--Renegade Maj Sa'd Haddad granted Sidon a truce over the weekend while that southern city tends its wounds and prepares a response to his conditions. The state took the opportunity to send a representative of the Prime Minister Salim al-Hoss on a charity tour to Tyre and Sidon. It threatened to complain officially about Haddad to Waldheim.

The past week in Beirut nearly demonstrated the emergence of international contacts with the state of affairs in south Lebanon if not the previous recognition of the impossibility of moving toward positive or tangible results.

The week began with a visit of Brian Urquhart, undersecretary general for special political affairs of the United Nations. Jacques (Leprette), permanent French representative to the United Nations followed him. Although the two visits took place at a time of hardened attitudes regarding the important question of the international troops in the South (UNIFIL) the opportunity made the Lebanese Government attack the two principle problems connected to the situation in south Lebanon.

At the same time, as Urquhart listened to the president of the Chamber of Deputies, Kamal al-As'ad--the latter was asserting that it is preferable to withdraw UNIFIL from the south if it is incapable of effecting its duties, since its withdrawal "will lay Israel bare to the responsibility of answering to general international opinion"--the prime minister Dr Hoss, confirmed the Lebanese Government's understanding of the situation of the remaining troops being made Arab. He then asserted the hope for the necessity of renewed effort in the 3 remaining months of the UNIFIL's mandate to pressure Israel through every channel in order to aid implementation of the decisions of the UN Security Council.

Dr Hoss is no stranger to the problems of UNIFIL's occupation alone. However in his meeting with (Urquhart) he wanted to separate the two stages needed for the south, where the UN will continue its efforts to liberate the

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frontier strip from the militias of Sa'd Haddad and from the Israeli Government's troops in spite of the state's failure to dispatch the Lebanese army to Tyre.

Dr Hoss said to (Urquhart) that the state, now facing domestic problems, agrees to this without taking the step of sending its army into Tyre with all due dispatch, because it has become necessary that the United Nations not be diverted from its efforts to take the first steps in a gradual program to spread the UNIFIL forces up to the internationally recognized borders.

Toward the Definition of Dual Nationals

UN forces believe that (Urquhart) is aware of these difficulties and he understands the fundamental picture of what Prime Minister Hoss says, even though the latter for his part understands the position of the UN secretary general and his inability to settle the issue by implementing the Security Council's decisions.

For that reason the UN believes that the two sides want a fixed period to set up "a transitionary bridge toward the renewal of the international forces after the expiration of their mandate on 19 January 1981"--that is a way of reasserting the necessity of the forces' remaining and awaiting an appropriate opportunity.

The UN sources feel that the renewal will not meet any fundamental obstacles if it can enable the creation of some justification which both Hoss and (Urquhart) perceive in Waldheim's decision.

The possibility of removing UNIFIL from the peacekeeping forces in south Lebanon is the second problem which Hoss will discuss with (Urquhart) and Jacques (Leprette).

Prime Minister Hoss has already stated that the current situation in south Lebanon will not be stabilized--witness Israel's assaults on western sector villages which occurred during (Urquhart) and (Leprette's) visits in Beirut--unless the shared international forces are not diverted from their task of preventing the destruction which might result if they evacuate.

Cabinet Minister Fu'ad Butrus also asserted this point to the two visitors. He gave them an understanding for the Lebanese position. Butrus said, "The beginning of any evacuation whatsoever of UNIFIL in south Lebanon will lead to other evacuations which might subject the southern region to the possibility of new Israeli raids." Butrus said that (Urquhart) and (Leprette) will convey this position to responsible authorities in both New York and Paris.

Butrus added that the French representative asked if Lebanon has any specific proposals concerning the Middle East crisis. He replied that Lebanon supports the necessity of granting the Palestinian people their

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lawful rights to establish a state on their home soil. Any attempt to repatriate the Palestinians at the expense or on the lands of other Arab states would meet with Lebanese opposition. Butrus delivered a copy of the principles of their accord and a letter from President Sarkis to the French representative in order that it might be the official position on this issue.

Sidon Bears the Harsh Effects of the South's Problems

At any event the south's problems is not that of the frontier strip alone--nor is it the problem of the forces, international, governmental, or non-governmental--which live, work and fight each other in and around the border strip. The problems there overflow and rise out of this border zone toward the north. Today this is the problem which is reflected, with all its explosive and negative ramifications, in the city which up to now was relatively secure. The city is Sidon, capital of the entire southern region.

What is Sidon's problem?

In March 1975 the previous deputy, Maruf Sa'd, died in Sidon during a clash between the Lebanese army and demonstrators against the Protein fishing company. That led to a series of demonstrations against the army in Sidon and other Lebanese cities. In March 1980 a number were killed and wounded in another conflict in Sidon between the Lebanese army and armed followers of the PLO resistance and the Patriotic Movement. That led to a strike and counterrally in support of the army in Sidon.

Has the army changed, or has Sidon, or what?

Certain ranks within the Patriotic Movement in the south acknowledge that the occurrence of the counterdemonstration against the Lebanese army assigned to the Zughrayb barracks in Sidon (1975) led to enormous resentment among the Sidonians to these demonstrations. However these people in the Patriotic Movement assert that the citizens' attitude necessarily due to the structure of the Lebanese army is a balance inconsistent with unchanging factionalism, although the city-wide strike appeared to be supportive of the forces of the lawful authority.

The Patriotic Movement says that Sidon has left the events of 1975-76 behind as well as the Israeli assaults on the south. It is undergoing a sort of boom, the cause of which is the increase of its population to 300,000 people, mainly immigrants. On the other hand, Sidon has a serious social crisis, caused by this huge influx and its effect on social services, city neighborhoods, and the public parks which have been the sites of most of the squatting, misappropriation and illegal usage.

The Patriotic Movement adds that these conflicting conditions have led to an increase in the resentment against the security forces. It has led to an abuse of every link to expressions of the townspeople's desire to place their city under the control of law and order.

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If this statement is correct--as was stated by sources in the Patriotic Movement--then Sidon which demonstrated against the army in 1975 was not demonstrating against individuals as much as it was demonstrating against the leadership which expelled (al-Qudur)--a well-known criminal--from Tripoli, but let (al-Dankura)--another well-known criminal--remain in Zagharta; a leadership which suppressed the demonstrations against oppression in Sidon and among angered families in Ba'lbek, and which let the Kataeb militia units strike against the citizens of Ayn al-Ramana (al-Dakwana) and (al-Maslakh).

Likewise if Sidon demonstrated and held strikes against the attack on the army barracks in 1980, it only undertook this out of desire that the legitimate authority prevail in the southern region in spite of the recognition that the army will not be entrusted with the discharge of its important duties throughout Lebanon before its structural organization is transformed to its proper national form.

The Request To Halt the Decay of Security

Mustapha Ma'ruf Sa'd, chairman of the Political Council of the Patriotic Movement in Sidon, says that the Patriotic Movement has always been responsive to the residents of the city for whatever peace and stability they wanted, even though the movement stands to lose its stake. It also raised objections to Palestinian clashes within the city and has demanded the expulsion of armed groups from the market neighborhoods which have not witnessed 1 week with 1 or more days of closure forced by reason of clashes or factional killings or protests arising from such events.

Today the Sidon Chamber of Commerce and Industry proposed that a quick solution to the deterioration of security be found so that these abnormal circumstances will not recur in the city. The chamber has already made contacts with the leadership of the PLO in the south in order to direct affairs after the Arab Deterrent Forces are withdrawn from the city and the Palestinian liberation army takes charge of security duties.

The PLO said that Israeli bombing of the southern areas has aggravated the immigration problem and the city's inability to cope with it. That in turn has led to all the problems rising out of squatting and based on absentee ownership. This has also led to the frictions which precede outbreaks of violence.

The solution? It is obvious that up to now all forces want an end to this abnormal conduct of affairs, however none of them knows how to translate these desires into workable actions in the absence of legitimate authority. The PLO does not want the responsibility of policing the city, neither does the Patriotic Movement although it has taken it on occasion.

For that reason the solution, which is currently being studied, is to clear the city of armed groups and surrender its fate to the internal security forces which are here in cooperation with the leadership of the Palestinian liberation army.

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All of this comes in anticipation of the army which might reintroduce after a 5 year absence an unifying agent into Sidon after there having been there the first sparks of Lebanese civil war.

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LEBANON

BEIRUT SPECULATES ON TURMOIL IN SYRIA

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 3 Apr 80 pp 28-29

[Article: "Karami's Friendly Advice to the Lebanese: 'Don't Bet on Changes in Syria'"]

[Text] The recent developments in Syria greatly affected the various diplomatic and political circles within Lebanon. There was no statement of agreement coming out of Lebanon nor have there been any steps to exploit Syria's troubles. Not until the persistent rumor arose about the expansion, change, or reformation of the Syrian Government were these problems even worthy of attention.

The recent developments in Syria have forced various circles to attempt to understand what is happening in view of the great interdependence that exists between the two countries. Whatever happens in Syria must be reflected in Lebanon, whatever the outcome may be, and Syria will remain a center of gravity through its military and political presence within Lebanon and its role there.

The developments in Syria do not renew the widespread rumor especially after the Syrian authorities announced their intentions to resist the Muslim Brotherhood and the violent political and religious activities which have been fomented in the north of Syria. Following Syria's accusation even President Carter said that the U.S. sympathizes with internal situation there.

But what diplomatic and official circles in Lebanon are working toward is an attempt to confine the spreading of these disturbances to Lebanon and to draw a picture of Syria's future in light of them.

When the foreign minister left the Republican Palace after conferences with the Lebanese president, Elias Sarkis, he explained to correspondents: "I state with complete frankness that no one can speculate on any development within Syria which some have already done expecting to make conditions conform to what he presumes or anticipates. Natural relations will determine what will continue to hold in all cases as well as one could possibly wish to be for the well-being of Syria and the well-being of Lebanon together."

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This statement served public notice for the first time of the existence of groups in Lebanon which speculate on the possibility of bringing about a change in Syria which might lead to a change of circumstances and given facts within Lebanon.

This word comes directly from this important political leader, as if he were affirming what has been said through the anticipation and expectation of some quarters of the Lebanese Government that Syrian developments will lead to something which might enable them to act independently toward becoming emancipated from the Syrian grip which restricts their maneuverability and forces matters in the direction of an agreement of principles and the actual participation of the (Nationalist Lebanese Party)--something contrary to the desires of these circles.

As a matter of fact those who speculate on a change of regime in Syria are a very small minority, whose views consistently disregard entire aspects of the given situation. And until Arab diplomatic sources in Beirut see in the Syrian disturbances which have occurred an operation involving only the Syrian Government and see that this internal distraction aimed at weakening the regime and not at changing it or causing its downfall, they will be misled. These sources give the list of cause which evince their reasoning as:

- 1) All the disturbances so far occurring have not been reflected in the governmental or political framework of Syria, and they have been unable to find as a result of them any support in the military sector and more precisely within the military staff capable of bringing about a change of regime. Lebanese military sources say that up to now plenty of evidence confirms the existence of a cohesiveness within the Syrian army that is supportive of President Asad.
- 2) These disturbances are confined to people who have minimally hostile attitudes toward the government, attitudes which are within populist circles. Informed circles in Beirut see that some of what happened reflects to a certain extent grievances in some rural quarter arising from specific social conditions, but these grievances have appeared under religious slogans which lends the movement to a political isolation from any internal confrontation and consequently distances these grievances from the basic units of people's power, i.e., from the popular guilds, unions, and associations.
- 3) The non-existence of any political leadership for the Muslim Brotherhood, internally or externally, tends to dilute any impetus for a change in view of the lack of an alternative form and because of the people's fear of the specters lurking behind these disturbances.

Arab diplomatic sources in Beirut say that some leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood are residing in Jordan and Turkey from whence they were too far from the field of activity at the time when the leaders of the day could not demonstrate any social, political, or economic incentives in

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their flyers which were circulated in Hamah and Aleppo. Their concentrated effort was entirely incapable of putting forward alternatives to the citizenry.

4) Attempts to create a schism between the two sects (Shi'ite and Sunni) in Syria to date have been restricted to regions considered to be by tradition strongholds of religious movements. These attempts have not been able to penetrate into the ranks of the majority of the citizenry. Also the official Syrian propaganda machine reported that within the Muslim Brotherhood there are suspicions amongst the Syrians since it has been asserted that some of their cells exist in eastern neighborhoods of Beirut under the protection of the militia units of the Kateab and the Liberation parties, while these militias are accused of a role in cooperation and conspiracy with Israel of fishing in Syria's troubled waters.

No Changes; Only a Bloodletting

In addition to these reasons which make it seem unlikely that the outcome of the riots will be a move to change the regime in Syria, Western diplomatic sources in Beirut cite the existence of a tacit international agreement which leaves no room for revolutionary movements in the Middle East at this time since the current regimes are still more capable of handling the Arab-Israeli conflict than any new regime which such revolutionary movements may select.

Right now these Western circles see that a decision to weaken Syria or bring it down by internal security confrontations or widespread disturbances would boomerang on the whole situation in the Middle East on the basis that fact that Syria was "weak" because the disturbances would have forced her to abdicate her role in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

But Lebanese observers do not share this view with Arab diplomats; that is basically that a "weak" Syria is more likely to have spasms and obstacles to a "just settlement" than is a strong decisive Syria.

This situation in Syria has pushed all parties in Lebanon to expectation in spite of all other analyses. Perhaps the group the most anxious by what it understands of the situation is the Palestinian resistance. It bases its fears on the ground that any change, when and if it occurs, will lead to a hardening of the situation in the region until the new political picture in Damascus can become clear. As an example, this stiffening of lines could lead effectively to the abortion of the package of Palestinian initiatives for international assistance, especially European assistance.

Palestinian sources say that the structure of the Syrian army and the internal situation both of them keep any possibility to one side that the regime will be brought down or that there will be a coup. These sources affirm the possibility of a change within the framework of the ruling party, this last possibility again being highly unlikely due to the control of President Asad, which he firmly asserted again at the last party conference.

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In Lebanon they are viewing the situation in Syria from the point of view of the effects as they are reflected on political circumstances in Lebanon. While in Damascus, their view of the troubled situation is the view of "a conspiracy" which aims to strike the country in the heart. And since President Asad has personally begun a campaign to break this conspiracy and is willing to commit to it every party and military mechanism, then official circles believe that the Syrian president wants to cut off groups opposed to him before they can flourish so that Syria will not fall into a vicious cycle of changes and upheavals which has ruined its reputation and its efforts and security in the 50's and 60's.

From here Western diplomats compare the state of anticipation in Lebanon to the state of one who wants to inject a wideranging imagination into the science of accounting.

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LEBANON

LOANS RAISED TO COVER LOSSES FROM DESTRUCTION OF BEIRUT'S PORT

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 3 Apr 80 pp 46-47

[Interview with the Chairman of the Council for Reconstruction Dr Muhammad 'Atallah--date and place not given]

[Text] The World Bank has agreed to grant Lebanon a new loan to finance work on the development and preparatory plan of Beirut port. This comes in addition to the first loan of \$23 million. Lebanon received the loan after it had expressed its wish to continue work on the project in spite of the security disturbances in the region.

The Lebanese Council for Growth and Reconstruction charged with work on the project will continue talks with the World Bank in order to define the value of the new loan and conditions for its repayment.

AL-WATAN-'ARABI was granted an interview with Dr Muhammad 'Atallah chairman of the Council for Reconstruction, about work on the port, the manner of investment, and the condition of the port authority which has as director of the board, Mr Henri Far'un. The interview went accordingly:

[Question] The port of Beirut is the heart through which the lifeblood of the Lebanese economy flows. How is work going on it, especially with regards to work on the development project in light of security disturbances?

[Answer] "In spite of these events work on Beirut port has not stopped since the end of 1977. However we cannot bear the cost of the large losses--namely the result of wasted time--that has on the one hand resulted in our failure to meet our specified work schedule and deadline, and on the other to increased costs.

"In addition to the increased costs caused by inflation there is new destruction and damage caused by the bombings which the port is exposed to--a matter which requires rebuilding or repairing that which has been destroyed in addition to whatever new development work there is.

"We've already begun negotiations with financial quarters in order to increase the financing necessary for the repairs of these damages. The World Bank has already agreed on the requested increases."

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Beirut Port Will Stimulate Other Ports

[Question] Assuming a return to peace and then afterwards the construction of the development project, will the port of Beirut by its activity become the bandleader to the hoped for progress during the stage of Lebanon's rebuilding.

[Answer] "Of course, especially the fourth basin which will be specialized to handle containerized ships. In our plan its service will be the finest service available in comparable ports."

[Question] An investment company was set up here recently under the management of Beirut port. What will happen after completing the development project--will the government recover its investment shares from the company?

[Answer] "Concerning the repayment of the funds which we have borrowed for financing, you have to invest in order to repay them. We've already taken investment measures so that we have the income with which to make repayment. We don't really know of any advance obligations to the government."

[Question] Do you believe that there is the possibility of giving this same company the right of investing in the development project?

[Answer] "That may be completed but under new conditions."

[Question] Is it possible to divide the management of the port authority especially out of investment concerns?

[Answer] "It is not possible that a division will be completed one way or the other, and the chief idea we have is that all Lebanese ports should be administered by means of a centralized national authority. We have already prepared a plan for that and we will present it to the cabinet for its approval. We insist on the fact that the administration be capable, effective and of a caliber competent enough to bear the responsibilities imposed on it."

[Question] Will this authority take charge of the administration of the investment?

[Answer] "We can see that the Beirut port now has 16 authorities responsible for it. But none of them is equipped with clear overriding responsibility. For that reason we demand a centralized port authority, and its duty will be to deal with all the affairs of the ports. This does not prevent the existence of a local administration for each port."

[Question] Then it's likely that the current investment company will continue its work?

[Answer] "Within the limits of the state's obligations the matter might be regulated, likewise it is appropriate that the Port of Beirut Company

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should be private, but by its contract with the government it shall become like other companies in the public sector.

"With respect to the subject of the recovering of the concessions or their loss, this is a matter which can be discussed in light of the state's public policy when it decides to withdraw these shares a new administration will result. If it decides to continue with the investing company in this case, as with the Council for Development and Reconstruction and as with the state, we have to order the company to create the mechanisms which will enable it to manage this port once it has been reactivated and modernized."

Dr 'Atallah affirmed in his talk with AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI that the port administration required for the coming years should be changed. It should have the technical and practical capability to make most profitable use of it, particularly with regard to the required port services. Especially since Beirut port must have a competitive position vis-a-vis other ports in the region so that to this extent it can play its proper role in international commerce.

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MAURITANIA

BRIEFS

NEW SNIM DIRECTOR--The board of directors of SNIM-SEM [National Industrial and Mining Company-Mauritanian Equipment Company] met in Paris on 30 April 1980 under the chairmanship of Mohamed Yehdih Ould Moktar el-Hacen. At the conclusion of this meeting Baba Ould Sidi Abdallah, a mining engineer, formerly deputy director-general of SNIM, was appointed director-general of this company. Prior to being appointed to head the enterprise Baba Ould Sidi Abdallah occupied the post of deputy director-general while a member of the board of directors which he has been since the establishment of SNIM. A mining engineer and born in Aleg in 1940, Baba Ould Sidi Abdallah successively occupied the positions of department head of mines at the directorate of mines and geology, director of the industrial section, director of equipment at SNIM, once again director of the industrial section, and then deputy director-general of SNIM-SEM before becoming its director-general. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 16 May 80 p 1149] 2662

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR VOLUNTEERS--The National Commission for Volunteers, an organ established in Mid-April 1980 by the Mauritanian Government to concretize "the so strongly expressed wishes of the nation's active forces to see themselves endowed with an adequate framework able to channel their energies at the service of the national rehabilitation effort," met in Nouakchott to define the parameters of its activities. This meeting heard an opening speech delivered by Lt Cdr Dahane O Ahmed Mahmoud, minister in charge of the executive office of the Military Committee for National Safety. The minister indicated that "what is involved is to go into the field to conserve water indispensable to life, check the advance of the desert, or fight illiteracy. This is how the Mauritians will recognize who is looking out for their welfare and their development. but also and especially who is ready to sacrifice himself for those goals. "So that no one may be deceived any longer those who wish to build Mauritania will find themselves in the workyards of volunteers scattered across the country at the side of the army and those who support the military government; the others, social parasites, will be unmasked." [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 2 May 80 p 1035] 2662

NOUADHIBOU WATER SHORTAGE--According to a report in the daily newspaper 25 April 1980, the city of Nouadhibou has been experiencing for the past

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2 weeks an acute water shortage which prompted SONELEC [National Water and Electric Power Company] to ration the water of Boulanouar. Thus, running water is now available only for 6 hours a day. The causes of the shortage, it is noted in Nouadhibou, are defects found in four wells of Boulanouar. SONELEC's reaction has two goals: To overcome the present crisis and limit water consumption. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 2 May 80 p 1035] 2662

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SAUDI ARABIA

PROSPECTS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF ARMAMENTS INDUSTRY DISCUSSED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 4-10 Apr 80 pp 72-73

[Interview by AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI Correspondent with Lt Gen Ibrahim Muhammad al-Faris, Director General of the Saudi Armaments Factories, in Riyadh--date not given]

[Text] The Saudi town of al-Kharj, not far from the capital, Riyadh, is the site of an unpublicized and modest Saudi factory for the production of arms and ammunition. The facility relies entirely on Saudi labor and Arab expertise. Officials of the Saudi Armaments Industry insist that the primary objective of the operation is to improve the quality and quantity of Saudi armaments and to reduce gradually their country's dependence on imported arms and ammunition.

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI's correspondent visited the factory and came up with the following report.

From the moment one sees them, the Saudi armament facilities, which occupy a large tract of land in al-Kharj, give every appearance of being a thoroughly independent Arab operation. There are ambitious plans for expanding the operation and the facility to produce more sophisticated arms and ammunition, in order to make Saudi Arabia self sufficient in small arms and ammunition.

The sprawling complex, where hundreds of students study under Arab experts, occupies a large area of treed land. From the classroom, the students move on to the tens of modern laboratories and from there to the equally modern factories which produce a variety of rifles and ammunition.

The entire operation is conducted quietly and unobtrusively under the supervision of confident men. AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI interviewed Lt Gen Ibrahim Muhammad al-Faris, Director General of the Armaments Factories, who told us not only about the progress of the operation to-date, but about future plans including social and health services, as well as the recently constructed modern hospital with its own helicopter to speed up the transportation of injured workers to the medical facility. The general also told us about the modern athletic fields, with room for thousands of spectators, that have been constructed around the armaments facility in al-Kharj. Following is the text of our interview with General al-Faris.

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[Question] Can you give us an idea about the history of the facility and the type of arms produced?

[Answer] The idea for a Saudi armaments industry originated during the reign of King 'Abd al'Aziz, may God have mercy on him, to crown his work in unifying the country. The idea first appeared in 1948. In 1949, discussions were begun with France for the construction of a small-caliber ammunition factory for the production of 30mm ammunition to serve the needs of the Saudi army. The negotiations with France stipulated that facilities for producing more advanced armaments would follow. In 1969 we began to look for a location for the facility. Al-Kharj was selected for a number of strategic reasons. The area is far from the border and easy to defend. The weather in al-Kharj is also suitable. In 1953 we began to manufacture small-caliber ammunition. With the aid of French experts and Saudi young men who had been trained in France, our production increased gradually. Production reached its highest level in 1956 during the French [Anglo-French-Israeli] aggression against Egypt and due to demand from Algeria which was receiving ammunition from Saudi Arabia. French reaction to our position was hostile and a French attempt was made to sabotage our ammunition factory. Our relations with France deteriorated. Three years later, however, production returned to normal.

Since then, production at the Saudi Armaments Factory has developed gradually. With French assistance, we began to produce G-3 rifles, the same type used by the NATO forces. We also manufacture ammunition for the G-3 rifle. Our output is limited to our needs and the needs of some neighboring countries.

We now have other projects, including one for the production of 12mm machine-gun ammunition and 7mm pistol ammunition. Five additional factories are in the construction stage and production will begin this year. The new facilities will manufacture 20mm air-to-ground and air-to-air ammunition. They will also produce 81 and 120mm mortars and a very advanced type of hand grenade, as well as airplane bombs for use in training exercises. Furthermore, our 5-year plan includes a number of studies for the manufacture of heavy artillery and ground-to-air anti-aircraft ammunition. The entire operation will be manned entirely by Saudis. Saudi personnel will administer the operation and be responsible for further development and planning. The operation will rely heavily on modern machinery and equipment to reduce the need for manual labor.

I should like to use this opportunity to tell you about other aspects of our armaments industry, the human aspects.

We have hospitals, clubs, schools, and special playgrounds for the children of our workers. We have a technical training center which can accommodate 600 students at a time. The center is our source of skilled technicians.

In addition, more than 200 Saudi youth are now training in the United States and Europe. These are over and above the ones who have already finished their training and are employed by the armament industry.

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Needless to say that the primary objective of our industry is to realize self-sufficiency in the production of ammunition. This matter is of primary concern to our government at all levels. Of course, we have, in addition, a few other ambitious plans; but these cannot be discussed at this time. We have, for example, a research and development center whose function is to seek innovations applicable to our weapons systems from the airplane to the tank. We also have a central maintenance center which is essential to the armaments industry. It supplies our industry with a more than adequate supply of certain materials. We sell the excess to the local industries so they could benefit by it. The surplus materials are sold at cost. Our purpose is to help the local industries to develop and to reduce their dependence on companies, particularly foreign ones, which have a virtual monopoly of these materials.

[Question] Judging by the size of the training center at the factory, it appears that a very large number of students receive their theoretical and practical training here. Could you tell us how many students graduate per year?

[Answer] The center conducts many training sessions. Some of these are short and are aimed at those who come here to acquaint themselves with the modern machinery at the factory. New [regular] students, however, must remain here for 18 months for theoretical and practical training before they can graduate. We graduate approximately 600 students every 18 months. Not every graduate, of course, is an expert. Skill comes with experience. We do not expect those who spend a year with us to be on a par with those who remain for 2 or 3 years.

[Question] Can the Saudi Armaments Factories absorb that large number of trainees?

[Answer] At the present, yes. A number of our graduates are sent abroad for further, specialized training. When we have more graduates than we can absorb, we send them overseas to learn the latest in the arms and ammunition production techniques. Our goal, in addition to becoming self-sufficient in this area, is to increase the expertise of our graduates. We try to develop the individual as much as we try to achieve self-sufficiency.

Let us return to what we do at the factory. You have seen during your tour the facility where we manufacture G-3 rifles. With a few minor changes, the facility can turn out machineguns and pistols. There is no need for that at the moment. The facility was originally designed to produce machineguns. No additional technical expertise is needed to switch from one line of production to another. Should we decide to turn out machineguns and pistols, we can do that quickly.

[Question] What benefits do your trainees enjoy?

[Answer] They are provided with many privileges and an excellent standard of living. Each trainee receives a monthly compensation of 1,000 Saudi riyals.

After graduation compensation jumps considerably to a very appropriate level. The trainees are provided with housing, medical care, and other benefits.

[Question] Are there other munition factories in Saudi Arabia?

[Answer] Not at this time. The Armament Planning Commission has completed plans for another factory to be added to this complex. The factory is designed to produce very sophisticated and advanced equipment. Construction will begin when the commission decides if and when to go ahead. Should these plans change, there is a good chance that we will turn to the production of electronic equipment. We also have plans for the production of [military] clothing and tents. Right now, we give greater priority to more essential items.

[Question] Has the munitions complex realized the goals for which it was intended?

[Answer] The accomplishments of the engineers and young men who work here have been excellent. We are proud of their work. Their achievements have surpassed my expectations. They are innovative and productive. I am very pleased with their work and hope it will continue on this level in the service of our country.

[Question] What are your projections for Saudi Arabia's armaments industry?

[Answer] The future is bright. We built on a good foundation. There is no doubt in my mind that the future is good. We are now thinking of further development and expansion to other parts of the country. We are considering the construction of new facilities in the al-Aflaj and al-Alqasim regions, where water supplies are adequate. Our goal is to disperse the armament industry for strategic and economic development reasons. Our government's policy is to spread the benefits of economic development to all parts of the country.

I hope that we can realize all our goals. I also hope that our present munitions industry will continue to serve the need for which it was designed, i.e., to make us self-sufficient and militarily independent.

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TUNISIA

TUNISIAN IMAGE CHANGE PHENOMENON EXAMINED

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 14 May 80 p 11

[Article by Ahmed Kedidi, Tunisian writer and journalist: "The Tunisian Phenomenon"]

[Text] For a small country like Tunisia, lodging and administering the Arab League, directing the organization of the Islamic Conference, representing the African and Arab countries at the Security Council and presiding over the Group of the 77 at the United Nations constitutes if not a political success, at least a diplomatic feat. In the eyes of political economists this is an important phenomenon because this country has succeeded in less than two decades in radically changing its image among the Arab and Moslem countries which had formerly censured it.

Crisis of Values

In the Moslem context, it will be remembered that in 1957 when President Bourguiba called for a better interpretation of Islam--in the light of modern life--and when he promulgated a personal status code abolishing polygamy and arbitrary repudiation, the Arab countries inveighed against the scandal. The young Tunisian state held its own, and experience showed that despite certain excesses tolerance and courage would end by triumphing. If today Tunisian society is undeniably undergoing a certain crisis of moral values and linguistic and intellectual confusion, its horizons remain promising.

In the Arab context, since 1965 Tunisia had been considered the rotten apple of the Arab world, which accepted an Egyptian hegemony forged by slogans broadcast by Saout El Arab (the Voice of the Arabs).

Bourguiba made a different voice heard. When on 11 March 1965 in Jericho he shocked Arab opinion by telling it the basic truths concerning the Palestinian problem and by declaring that the Palestinians were primarily responsible for their destiny, that the protectorship of the Arab countries served only to sow discord and to alienate the cause of this militant people, that Zionist expansion was a colonial fact, there was again quasi-unanimous censure. Two years later, in May 1967, Nasser singlehandedly decided to close

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the maritime routes to Israeli commerce, and 5 June 1967 saw the end of the illusory Arab superiority, bring about a most decisive sudden awakening by the Arab world.

In-Depth Work

The Palestinian resistance came into existence with Yasser Arafat who was able to put an end to the dissension and schisms in the revolution and to unify the Palestinian movements within an organization for military and political struggle. This is precisely what Bourguiba had foreseen.

But wasn't Tunisia's relative political stability the fruit of in-depth work undertaken by a state which, despite internal strife and some upheavals has remained strong and structured? After some confused stances with respect to the problems of the People's Republic of China and Southeast Asia, since 1971 Tunisian diplomacy has appreciably broken free from an accomodating line toward the West thanks to alleviation of its foreign debt and to an increasing dynamic and rationalized economy. Following the aspirations of the Tunisian people it tends to move in its natural geopolitical area: the Arab-Moslem world.

Merited Respect

This small country, without natural resources, has cleared a respectable path for itself among the developing nations, with one of the lowest inflation rates of the Third World. And the fact that it does not export "revolution" earns it merited respect.

It is true that today Tunisia faces obstacles and imperatives. Internally, a necessary reconciliation between economic development and intellectual development. Externally, a difficult line of neutral conduct in an increasingly agitated and coveted region. The future will tell whether the Tunisian statesmen will be able to meet the major challenges which the end of this century presents in order to avoid the storm blowing across nations in disorder, from Africa to Asia, by way of Latin America.

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TUNISIA

CHANGES IN POLITICAL ORIENTATION NOTED

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 14 May 80 pp 18, 19

[Article by correspondent Souhayr Belhassen: "Springtime for Tunis"]

[Text] It was at the 1 May meeting at the Congressional Palace that the Tunisians really effected the change--at first, in style. In the new prime minister Mohamed M'Zali they have regained not only a democratic leader but also the pedagogue with the simple and warm way of speaking whose way of transmitting the message perhaps counted more than the content. That, however, was not negligible: the 10 percent increase which raises the interoccupational guaranteed minimum wage to 54 dinars, for example, and, still more significant, the generalization of the subsidies to single-income families--a basic demand of many strikes on the eve of "Black Thursday" (26 January 1978). Not to mention the social benefits for the agricultural workers.

These decisions are a preamble to the government's program which M'Zali will present in several days to the National Assembly. An ambitious program, the work of an entire team obviously determined to leave the disaster of "overture is adventure" behind--in order to resume the motto of one of Nouira's ministers. "The favorable reaction of public opinion obliges us to see this favorable precedent through," says one of M'Zali's ministers.

The first instruction is "settle the problems of trade and student unions," or rather, my interlocutor corrected himself, weighing his words, "make it possible for the unions to settle their problems." As for UGTT (Tunisian General Federation of Labor), it is a question of bringing about a transition in order to make it possible for the group of affiliated trade unions to make commitments to government and to make these commitments respected." In order for this to be done, the handicap encumbering the present leaders must be removed. To begin with a provisional committee would be appointed, composed of former trade unionists, including some of the former "legitimate" leadership, who would set up elections for January 1981.

Among the trade unionists, names are being mentioned: Abdelaziz Bouraoui, the former assistant general secretary, sentenced to six months of prison in October 1978. Mohammed Kraiem, another former official and friend of former

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general secretary Habib Achour. Or...the old leader himself. But Achour, contacted by telephone at home where he has been under house arrest since his release on 3 August 1979, answered us, "I am not free! Hence I am unable even to pass judgment on the situation." The essential thing, however, is that the UGTT again become an interlocutor, defining its demands and its share of responsibility. The government would like strong social partners in order to reestablish the major economic balances.

Scepticism

The same approach for the university. "We want to take the risk of an adversary organization which acts openly rather than an opposition with no recourse but violence." The integrationist or leftist terrorists who confront each other at the university have not failed to alarm the government. For more than a year the leaders have been calling for the establishment of an independent UGET (General Union of Tunisian Students). Today they want to go before the students and find a formula that is "credible and acceptable to them in order to make them responsible."

Thus, in a wider sense, this is a redefinition of the government's relationships with the different political trends which are--or are not --being expressed in the country. Is this to say that the existence of one or several other parties in addition to the PSD (Destourian Socialist Party) will be recognized? Ultimately that is the objective. In the meantime the other trends will be able to have their newspapers on the same basis as the Movement of Democratic Socialists. In order, as one member of the government says, "to permit us both to serve our apprenticeships. I do not think that truth or values are limited to the government."

Can this attractive program lead to a regular "springtime" for Tunis? Yes, if it wins the approval of public opinion and if a popular trend supports the will for change. But many Tunisians remain sceptical. They readily cite the example of 1980 (after the fall of Ahmed Ben Salah) and the disenchantment which followed, perhaps forgetting that in 1970 there were as many officials in government as opposing trends. That is not the case today, when a united team surrounds a prime minister who is determined. These men also represent a new generation, that of the '50's, who are little marked by the struggles of the past, in which most desire a change that no one contests. M'Zali will perhaps be the Tunisian Suarez (the name of the Spanish prime minister). But a Suarez who would have established overture before the succession. Why not? After all, President Bourguiba does not like to let himself be overtaken by events. And it is he above all who created the events.

The event that there are now only two trade unionists in prison of the 35 who appeared in court 18 months ago. Furthermore, the event that the political prisoners, on probation after 11 years of prison, are in possession of their passports and could leave the country. The minister of the interior Driss Guiga, hopes that between now and 3 August there will be no more political prisoners. Will amnesty be proclaimed? It would create the conditions for a major national debate for the opposition.

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There is no disorder in the economy, even if a revival is imperative. But for Minister Abdelaziz Lasram "a reevaluation of the situation with the heads of enterprises and the workers is imperative in order to conduct concerted action." At the Ministry of Social Affairs the distribution of incomes is being studied so that the revival will not be accomplished to the detriment of wage-earners. For its part, the API (Investment Promotion Agency) will proceed with an inventory of industrial developments which must be adapted to the evolution of the world economy. An evaluation of energy is also underway. It should result in middle term objectives. The fifth plan will conclude in 1981; a main direction has already been set for the sixth: the rehabilitation of agriculture with a view not only to self-sufficiency in food but also to more balanced development of the interior of the country. In fact, it has not been forgotten that the economic difficulties had a role in what happened at Gafsa at the beginning of the year.

Detente and Prudence

A new approach is also being taken in international relations. The struggle for national interests must be reconciled with the struggle for the South in the fact of the North, it is asserted with conviction. It is necessary to finally stop thinking that the Tunisian is a European exiled in Africa, to affirm Arabism, Africanness and Third-Worldism. The imminent opening of new embassies in Africa, Asia and Latin America illustrates this will. Like M'Zali's presence at the OAU economic summit in Lagos (28-29 April): for the first time in a really long time a conference of the organization saw Tunisia represented by its prime minister. Interested, the Algerians wondered whether Tunisia was going to start wanting to play a role in Africa and which one.

Detente in the West, but also in the East: as for the Libyans, they let it be known that they were ready to go halves with Tunisia in the matter of the continental plateau! But the Tunisians, cautious, prefer a decision from the International Court of Justice, even if the division should favor Libya.

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